

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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AMEMBASSY BERLIN
AMEMBASSY WARSAW
AMEMBASSY TOKYO
AMEMBASSY PRAGUE
AMEMBASSY VIENNA
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C O N F I D E N T I A L PARIS 07362

PASS USEEC

PASS TREASURY

E.O. 11652:GDS
TAGS: OECD EGEN, EEWT, FR
SUBJECT: EAST-WEST ECONOMIC RELATIONS: PROPOSED
COMMON WESTERN ASSESSMENT OF EASTERN

ECONOMIC PROSPECTS.

REF: STATE 034703
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1. EMBASSY BELIEVES REFERENCE PROPOSAL AND IN-DEPTH
ANALYSIS VERY TIMELY AND CONSULTATIONS BY MAJOR EAST-
WEST TRADING COUNTRIES OF COMECON ECONOMIC PROBLEMS
WOULD BE VERY USEFUL. FRANCE, HOWEVER, HAS
NURTURED ITS BILATERAL ECONOMIC TIES WITH COMECON
COUNTRIES, PARTICULARLY WITH THE USSR AND POLAND, IN

ORDER TO STRENGTHEN ITS ROLE AS A FORERUNNER OF DETENTE AND TO ESTABLISH ITS "SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP" WITH THOSE COUNTRIES INDEPENDENT OF "BLOC" POLITICS. ALTHOUGH NOT OPENLY HOSTILE TO SUCH A PROPOSAL, WE BELIEVE FRANCE WOULD NOT WELCOME IT IN THE MULTINATIONAL FORUM WHICH OECD WOULD PROVIDE, PARTICULARLY ON SUCH A POLITICALLY SENSITIVE TOPIC. OPPOSITION WOULD NOT BE BECAUSE THE EXERCISE WOULD BE UNINFORMATIVE BUT BECAUSE OF POTENTIAL DETRIMENTAL POLITICAL SIDE-EFFECTS AND POSSIBLE POLICY OBLIGATIONS FRANCE WOULD PREFER TO

AVOID AS A RESULT OF SUCH DISCUSSIONS. FRANCE'S DESIRE FOR QUIET ANONYMITY IN SUCH COOPERATIVE EFFORTS AS THE CREDIT CONSENSUS, COCOM DELIBERATIONS, AND EVEN WITHIN THE RECENT OECD E-W TRADE STUDY ARE SAMPLES OF FRANCE'S RETICENCE FOR MULTINATIONAL APPROACHES WHERE HER BILATERAL TIES WOULD BE AFFECTED. ANTICIPATED COMECON COUNTER-REACTIONS TO SUCH A COOPERATIVE EFFORT WOULD ALSO BE OF CONCERN TO FRANCE. RIGHTLY OR WRONGLY SUCH A JOINT STUDY COULD BE VIEWED BY COMECON AS A THREATENING "WESTERN" EXERCISE. FRANCE WOULD SEE POTENTIAL DAMAGE TO E-W DETENTE AND TO INDIVIDUAL COMECON COUNTRIES' PLANS FOR DIVERSIFYING AND EXPANDING THEIR ECONOMIC TIES WITH NON-COMECON COUNTRIES. THIS APPRAISAL WOULD BE ACCENTUATED SHOULD A LEFT GOVERNMENT BE ELECTED IN FRANCE IN MARCH.
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2. WE, THEREFORE, CONCUR WITH THE PROPOSAL FOR AN ASSESSMENT OF ECONOMIC PROSPECTS OF THE EASTERN ECONOMIES, BUT WE BELIEVE FRANCE WOULD NOT BE AN

ENTHUSIASTIC SUPPORTER AND WOULD WANT IT TO BE CARRIED OUT AS DISCREETLY AS POSSIBLE WITHOUT POLICY OR CONSENSUS OBLIGATIONS. FRANCE WOULD PROBABLY BE MORE WILLING TO HAVE SUCH DISCUSSIONS IN A LESS FORMAL FORUM THAN THE OECD, POSSIBLY AS A MORE CONFIDENTIAL GROUP, STRICTLY WITHIN THE G-6 CONTEXT.
HARTMAN

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